

Fishery Conservation and Management

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FIGURE 1 TO PART 665—CARAPACE LENGTH OF LOBSTERS

FIGURE 2 TO PART 665—LENGTH OF FISHING VESSELS

FIGURE 3 TO PART 665—SAMPLE FABRICATED ARCENEUX LINE CLIPPER

AUTHORITY: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

SOURCE: 75 FR 2205, Jan. 14, 2010, unless otherwise noted.

Subpart A—General

§ 665.1 Purpose and scope.

(a) The regulations in this part govern fishing for western Pacific fishery ecosystem MUS by vessels of the United States that operate or are based inside the outer boundary of the U.S. EEZ around American Samoa, Hawaii, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, Palmyra Atoll, Kingman Reef, Jarvis Island, Baker Island, Howland Island, Johnston Atoll, and Wake Island.

(b) General regulations governing fishing by all vessels of the United States and by fishing vessels other than vessels of the United States are contained in 50 CFR part 600.

(c) Regulations governing the harvest, possession, landing, purchase, and sale of shark fins are found in 50 CFR part 600 subpart N.

(d) This subpart contains regulations that are common to all western Pacific fisheries managed under Fishery Ecosystem Plans (FEPs) prepared by the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

(e) Regulations specific to individual areas and fisheries are included in subparts B through F of this part.

(f) Nothing in subparts B through F of this part is intended to supersede any valid state or Federal regulations that are more restrictive than those published here.

§ 665.2 Relation to other laws.

NMFS recognizes that any state law pertaining to vessels registered under the laws of that state while operating in the fisheries regulated under this part, that is consistent with this part and the FEPs implemented by this

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part, shall continue in effect with respect to fishing activities regulated under this part.

§ 665.3 Licensing and registration.

Any person who is required to do so by applicable state law or regulation must comply with licensing and registration requirements in the exact manner required by applicable state law or regulation.

§ 665.4 Annual catch limits.

(a) *General.* For each fishing year, the Regional Administrator shall specify an annual catch limit, including any overage adjustments, for each stock or stock complex of management unit species defined in subparts B through F of this part, as recommended by the Council, and considering the best available scientific, commercial, and other information about the fishery for that stock or stock complex. The annual catch limit shall serve as the basis for invoking accountability measures in paragraph (f) of this section.

(b) *Overage adjustments.* If landings of a stock or stock complex exceed the specified annual catch limit in a fishing year, the Council will take action in accordance with 50 CFR 600.310(g), which may include recommending that the Regional Administrator reduce the annual catch limit for the subsequent year by the amount of the overage or other measures, as appropriate.

(c) *Exceptions.* The Regional Administrator is not required to specify an annual catch limit for a management unit species that is statutorily excepted from the requirement pursuant to 50 CFR 600.310(h)(2), or that the Council has identified as an ecosystem component species. The Regional Administrator will publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER the list of ecosystem component species, and will publish any changes to the list, as necessary.

(d) *Annual catch target.* For each fishing year, the Regional Administrator may also specify an annual catch target that is below the annual catch limit of a stock or stock complex, as recommended by the Council. When used, the annual catch target shall serve as the basis for invoking accountability measures in paragraph (f) of this section.

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(e) *Procedures and timing.* (1) No later than 60 days before the start of a fishing year, the Council shall recommend to the Regional Administrator an annual catch limit, including any overage adjustment, for each stock or stock complex. The recommended limit should be based on a recommendation of the SSC of the acceptable biological catch for each stock or stock complex. The Council may not recommend an annual catch limit that exceeds the acceptable biological catch recommended by the SSC. The Council may also recommend an annual catch target below the annual catch limit.

(2) No later than 30 days before the start of a fishing year, the Regional Administrator shall publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER a notice of the proposed annual catch limit specification and any associated annual catch target, and request public comment.

(3) No later than the start of a fishing year, the Regional Administrator shall publish in the FEDERAL REGISTER and use other methods to notify permit holders of the final annual catch limit specification and any associated annual catch target.

(f) *Accountability measures.* When any annual catch limit or annual catch target is projected to be reached, based on available information, the Regional Administrator shall publish notification to that effect in the FEDERAL REGISTER and shall use other means to notify permit holders.

(1) The notice will include an advisement that fishing for that stock or stock complex will be restricted beginning on a specified date, which shall not be earlier than 7 days after the date of filing the notice for public inspection at the Office of the Federal Register. The restriction may include, but is not limited to, closure of the fishery, closure of specific areas, changes to bag limits, or restrictions in effort. The restriction will remain in effect until the end of the fishing year, except that the Regional Administrator may, based on a recommendation from the Council, remove or modify the restriction before the end of the fishing year.

(2) It is unlawful for any person to conduct fishing in violation of the restrictions specified in the notification